

(117)

Fresno, Calif.
9-8-96

1. Note: Grandfather J. F. Duerssen, in his post-script to W. G. Menno Gaede, made much of the "grace of God." My father told me of an incident related to him by Grandfather of a boy and a girl whose parents had died (in the "old country"). They were adopted by different families, and they lost track of each other. Then they met and fell in love, and they married (not knowing that they were brother and sister). Their marriage was a good marriage, and their children were all normal. Grandfather said, "That is the grace of God."

2. Note: I have tried to faithfully translate this family history of ours written originally in German. (Note the broken and incomplete sentences and the inconsistent punctuation.) I have had to do this by installments, which even then made me very tired both mentally and physically. This is my first "major" length of writing since my mild stroke in August, last year, but I enjoyed doing it.

—Marcellus Duerssen
(Grandson to J. F. Duerssen)

(3. Note: J. F. Duerssen was a pioneer for higher education. H. W. Lorenz was his star pupil at McPherson College who later became the ^{first} president of Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas.)

is represented in California. — Both brothers
were very hot-headed and lived in discord. —
(and 2. Heinrich Duerksen. He had a number of sons,
Abraham, Jakob, and Kornelius, Johan. Some of them
emigrated to America, to Dakota, 1879. — —

Suppliment to I. Generation.

My great-great-grandfather was also
married three times. Of his II. marriage descendants:
Old Kornelius Duerksen (and) Sara Duerksen. So
called, because he became very old. He was
married twice. Of his

I. marriage descendants:

1. Johann Duerksen (Shoe maker-cobbler).
2. Peter Duerksen (Tailor).
3. Anna Duerksen, married to Martin Diermann

(Alexandertal)

4. Elizabeth Duerksen, married to my Uncle
Cornelius Duerksen -- (Cooper, Hooker, California)
5. Katherina Duerksen, married to Johann Regier
(Elder) Henderson, Nebraska.

6. Sara Duerksen, married to David Friesen. His
descendants in California.

II. marriage descendants (with a Welk's daughter)

1. Kornelius Duerksen
2. Jakob Duerksen
3. Johann Duerksen
4. David Duerksen
5. Gerhard Duerksen
6. Heinrich Duerksen
7. Anna Duerksen, married to Kornelius

Dalke. Some of his children are Peter Dalke,

Mrs. H. D. Penner (Professor and Reverend) (3)
8. Helena Duerksen, married to Heinrich Friesen (at Hillsboro).
Some of his children are Cornelius H. Friesen, Buhler, and
my cousin's wife Mrs. Heinrich Duerksen, and Bernard
Friesen.

(and) Sara Duerksen
She was married to Peter Penner, their children
are:

1. Peter Penner (Alexanderkron)

2. Heinrich Penner

3. Jakob Penner (Aleksandertal)

4. David Penner, Buhler, Kansas

5. Franz Penner, Prangenau

6. Sara Penner, married to Heinrich Franz, Kansas,
Oklahoma. Their children were:

Peter Franz or Franzen, Corn, Oklahoma married to
my wife's sister Anna Warkentin, their children are:

Peter A. Fransen, married to Bessie Holly. Heinrich
W. Fransen, married to Katrina Merk. Sara Fransen,
married to Johann A. Isaak. Katrina Fransen
married to Abraham F. Diefehr. Johann W. Fransen.
Susanna Fransen, married to Albert C. Schmidt. David
L. Franzen. Elizabeth (1) Franzen, married to Alvin Hinz.
Matilda Franzen; Isaak Franzen.

Suppliment to I. Generation.

Descendants of my Great-great Grandfathers

III. marriage:

1. Gerhard Duerksen. A very useful and recognized
man, at times, he was village magistrate in Aleksandertal
and he was fire chief in the Motschna settlements, thus
over 60 villages. Some of his children are:

1. Abraham Duerksen - Blacksmith in Aleksandertal

2. David Duerksen - School teacher and elder in
Prangenau - then preacher in the Mennonite Brethren
Church and elder of our church in Crimea.

3. Gerhard Querksen, village magistrate and ⁽⁴⁾
then superior magistrate.

4. Cornelius Querksen.

5. Jakob Querksen.

6. Anna Querksen married to Heinrich Funk, my
cousin. He has died in prison.

Johann Querksen, usually called Oel-
ohn - Johann (or Oel-man - Johann) had 8
children, all born and raised in Russia and
practically all emigrated to America.

IV. Generation:

1. Heinrich Querksen, moved to America in
approximately 1875; has lived in Marion County, Kansas.
(Goessel area) His children Heinrich and Peter; Elizabeth
married to Heinrich Querksen, son of school teacher
Querksen of Alesandertal, and Maria Querksen, married
to Johann Kikkel at or in Hillsboro, Kansas.

2. Johann Querksen, to America 1875, Marion County,
Kansas. He had a strong family and much land. God
blessed this family in a special way. They were
pious farmer-people like most of our generations.
Uncle John died very suddenly, apparently just
before eating supper at the table.

3. Peter Querksen, lived in Elizabethtal,
Russia, was a miller and made flour; had a
windmill and a treadmill, and was a good
farmer. Has been married twice and has died in
Nikolaidorf of dropsy in a good old age. His
children are Johann (now in Canada), Julius,
Helena, Peter and Gerhard. They have had to
endure the severity of the revolution in Russia.

4. Cornelius Kuerksen, a very strong and lively man, lived in Ruderweide and on the Don-side on the land, was converted to God, wandered out to America and lived in Hillsboro, Kansas, then in California, he became an Adventist. Most of his children live at Shafter, California, apparently all are farmers.

5. Jakob F. Kuerksen married to Katherina Funk, lived in Alexandertal; he really wanted to become a tailor, but became miller with a small plot of land, and it went well with them. He sold his business and moved on a half allotment in acreage of land, and in every respect, the time was very hard for our parents. In the year 1884 they wandered out to America, Marion County, Kansas. Our mother died. — She had a great deal of rheumatism and died of an internal tumor — and was buried on July 2, 1889. Father married to widow Katherina Farms, and it went well with them. Of his first marriage he had eight children who outlived him.

6. Gerhard Kuerksen, Uncle Gerhard had a very lively nature, was strong and practically never sick. He lived on the land by the Don, Russia, wandered out to America and lived by us in Hillsboro, Kansas. Was a farmer and cattle land hog rancher. In his older age, he lived at and in Reedley, California and finally at last at Fairview, Oklahoma with his John. His second wife had very much trouble with him, being he became childish. He died in 1928 at great age.

7. Elizabeth Kuerksen married to Jacob Krocker in Alexandertal. At times he was a cobbler. They were very poor and belonged to the landless. They were sent away from Alexandertal to the village of their auditor. They had two sons and some daughters.

8. Eva Kuerksen, married to Peter Baerg, Elizabeth, a blacksmith foreman. I have met

one of his children in America; but where? — (6)
Jacob and Katharina born Funk-Duerksen lived
in Marion County, Kansas. Their children make the
F. Generation. — They are the following:

Johann F. Duerksen, born July 25, 1863 in Alexanderthal,
Russia. (and died May 1, 1932). My village school teacher
was Heinrich Ulrich, a good teacher, but who also
understood to make good use of the rod. Already at
that time, I made up my mind, that when I would be
a teacher, I would not want to swing the rod so
severely. After finishing the village school, I learned
to grind in father's mill; but soon I was permitted to
go to the Central School in Gnadenfeld, my teachers
were Herman Lenz, many, Abraham Braun and teacher
Hausknecht, and Popow Kolbe. From this Central School
I was permitted to go to Central School in Halbstadt,
and after that entered in the Pedagogical
department. I graduated in May, 1885 and became
teacher in Andreasfeld. In May, 1887, I moved to
America to my parents, went somewhat to
the district school and then in Salina and
McPherson and taught 1889-1890 in the church school
at Butler and 1898 to 1905 in the German
department in McPherson College; finally
1905 to 1916 teacher at the church school at Cerny,
Oklahoma. I married sister Katharina Warkentin on
January 9, 1893 in the Ebenezer Church sanctuary near
by Butler, Kansas. My dear wife died August 1, 1916.
I was widower 1916 to September 28, 1924, and on this
date wedded with widow Gertrude Warkentin born Kroeker
and have been happy after the years of my loneliness. In the
year 1893 I was made a preacher in the Mennonite Brethren
Church and still serve, even though in weakness.

Peter F. Duerksen born July 8, 1858 in Alexanderthal,
Russia. (d. in Dec. 21, 1946). Moved with the parents to
America 1884, went to school and was teacher

and attained the A.B. degree. Married to Anna Balzer, has a fine family, but lives separated from his family. He is in Miami, Florida.

Katherina Duerksen (1869-1903) married to Heinrich Siebert. They have a fine family. She had to die early of injuries in the breast.

Anna Duerksen (Born September 21, 1871) (d. 1933), married to Cornelius Harms, but he died very soon; after which she married to Abraham Gaede.

Jakob K. Duerksen (1875-1946) born in Russia, moved with the parents to America, became teacher, then music agent, then insurance agent. He is married to Helena Friesen, have three little children, and now live in Wichita, Kansas.

Helena Duerksen, married to Dietrich J. Classen, on their wedding day he received the news, that Uncle Sam had named him to receive 1/4 land in Oklahoma. - They lived thereon and moved to Corn, Oklahoma in the Church School, after that they moved to Bayview, Oklahoma, then to Bakersfield, California. They have a small family.

Maria Duerksen (1883-1919) married to Jakob Kliener, lived at Corn, Oklahoma, moved to Shafter, California. She has soon died there. They have a small family.

Sara Duerksen (1884-1960) married Jakob Katzlaff. lived at Orienta, Oklahoma, then at various places in California. They have a nice family, but apparently they are very poor.

Supplement IV. Generation Jakob J.

Duerksen married to Katherina Funk. They had the wedding on May 2, 1862, in the house of the bride's parents.

Peter Funk in Aleksandertal.

My grandfather Peter Funk came from Prussia to America with his parents Peter Funk when he was small. He was a member of the Mennonite church in Gnadenfeld. The name of my grandmother is Juli Anna Florentina Funky. She was baptized when small and belonged to the Lutheran church, to which

(8)

and dearly adhered until her end. She was grown up when she came from Russia to America. She went to the Gnadenfeld Mennonite Church out of love for our grandfather, and she made her way to the fellowship since their wedding. Grandfather Peter Funk had two brothers -- Paul Funk, who made his very difficult way through life, and Heinrich Funk, who also was called Bartfunk (or Beardfunk), who occasionally expressed very amusing opinions concerning matters of faith which were expressed. Apparently his son David Funk is an Adventist preacher, if he is still living. Our grandmother was sickly and for a long time could not drive along (with them) to church every Sunday. She loved reading prayer books and a collection of gems. Our grandparents had 2 sons and four daughters. These are Heinrich Funk, Katherine Funk, Sara Funk, Anna Funk, Wilhelmina Funk. Our mother Katherine Funk, married to Jakob F. Duerksen. Sara Funk, married to Abraham Duerksen, my father's cousin, Anna Funk, married to Heinrich Goosen, Wilhelmina Funk married to Abraham Penner. Peter Funk married to Maria Paul in a second marriage. This uncle is still living. Numerous children of this uncle and aunts are in Canada and America. Johann F. Duerksen and Katherine, born Warkentin, had their wedding on January 9, 1890 in the Ebenezer sanctuary near Butler, Kansas. Their family consists of the following children which make up the II. generation: Johann Walter Duerksen, born in the church school, August 9, 1891, at 7:30 o'clock evening. Went to school in McPherson Publick School. Then to one in Corn, then in Weatherford, taught a number of years, and went into the banking business in Coddell, then in the hardware in Weatherford and Corn, and afterwards in Fremont, Texas. Is married to Anna Richert, on February 21, 1915, have 3 children.

Abraham G. Duerksen born in the church school, on January 4, 1893, at 4:30 morning. Studied in the McPherson Public School, then in Corn Valley District School,

to me, then in Weatherford, has taught a few years, I married to Maria Bergmann on September 27, 1914 and are happy on their farm. - They have two children, Champ and Abraham. They were baptized on December 2, 1906, Jakob H. Duerksen, born in the church school on March 9, 1894, at 2:00 afternoon. Went to school in McPherson Public School and Corn Valley District School, and to me. He was not fond of reading books or even learning, also not of studying to become a doctor; he learned carpentry and served as a labour on the farm, also served in the army during the World War. He was converted and was baptized on November 30, 1919. He married Maria Reimer, the wedding on May 21, 1920. They have two children and are farmer-people.

Peter W. Duerksen, born in the church school on July 5, 1895 approximately at 5:00 morning. He came during a severe thunderstorm and we could not get a doctor for help. He studied in McPherson Public School and Corn Valley District School, to me, and in Weatherford, taught school and attended school. He has served in army during the War. Afterwards he again studied for the A.B. degree or B.S. He has married Anna Warkentin, on September 17, 1922 they had the wedding. He was converted and was baptized on April 7, 1912 on Easter Sunday.

Katherine Duerksen, born in the church school on October 9, 1896 approximately at 11:00 before noon. She is our only daughter. She studied at the College Kindergarten, then in McPherson Public School, and in Corn Valley District School, and to me, and then she should help the mother. She was converted and was baptized on April 7, 1912 on Easter Sunday.

Jakob S. Warkentin had the wedding with her on August 3, 1919, and (she) moved with him to California.

Heinrich McKinley Duerksen, born in the church school on April 14, 1898, approximately at 2:30 morni

in the College Kindergarten in McPherson (10)
School; and Corn Valley District School, and
was supposed to study under me, but that
me to naught. He didn't like books. He would
much rather dash through the neighborhood and
shoot skunks and wolves and muskrats, and
work on the land. He was in Canada during
the War and came home in approximately 1920.
He married Erna Harms, they had the wedding
on June 5, 1921. They have three ^{little} children. He was
converted and was baptized on June 16, 1918.
He is employed in the Post office.

Gerhard Herbert Kuerssen, born in McPherson
on December 8, 1901 on Sunday at approximately
at 6:30 morning. He studied in Corn Valley
District School, and to me, and in Weatherford,
and Tabor College. He taught and studied. He
was converted and is baptized on July 11, 1915.
He has attained his B.S. and his A.B. and is
striving for his A.M. and apparently should
soon attain his M.A.

So, the children of my children
make the VII. Generation.

Corn, Oklahoma
12-29-1928

Dear Menno:

Here you have something of our family chronicle.
O, Menno! All kinds of people among our relatives
and culprits.
and Oh, what a grace, whoever can keep the faith
Grace, fight the good fight and can through God's
stand by us, that we, saved from sin and preserved
from sin might live for Him in time and eternity. The
almighty bless ^{you} and make you a blessing in your
doctor practice.

Respectful greetings to you,
Your old Uncle J. F. Kuerssen and wife.